MODERN TIMES

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Vol. V, No 6 — **New Haven** — September 1-15, 1974

Worker Beats Avco in Free Speech Fight

Nick Heyer

Mike Holodnak, MT reporter, lost his job for article that was written for the Old AIM Newsletter. Recently, the courts have awarded him back pay and $10,000 damages.

by Modern Times Staff

Mike F. Holodnak, of Milford, known to Modern Times readers through his Brass Tacks column, had sued Avco-Lycoming of Stratford for violation of his constitutional rights to free speech and received a favorable decision from Circuit Court Judge J. Edward Lumbard.

On August 15, Judge Lumbard had ordered that Avco compensate Holodnak $9,113.24 in back pay plus $10,000 in punitive damages.

It all began back on May 28, 1969, when Holodnak was fired for having had an article published in the AIM Newsletter. The article, titled "Building a Union Local" had criticized the officials of Local 1010 for collaborating with the company at the expense of the rank and file.

Holodnak said that at the termination hearing the company "hatchetman, William Ashlaw, was so upset over my article that he wouldn't even listen to my committeeman, Joe Mezick, when he tried to argue for a lesser charge carrying a reduced penalty. But what struck me as very telling was when Ashlaw said that my article was disruptive to the 'harmonious relations' the union was having with the company."

"This was the kind of situation we were dealing with," Holodnak went on. "Because of their way of life, the company officials were able to distinguish right from wrong about as accurately as this guy Richard M. Nixon could."

When the grievance procedure was exhausted Holodnak went to arbitration and the Arbitrator, Burton Turkus, upheld the company's position.

Long Line of Decisions

George A. Johnson, who was AIM's attorney at that time, took Holodnak's case on a contingency basis and filed the suit in U.S. District Court against Avco.

On July 17, 1970, Judge Robert C. Zampano, in a "landmark" decision, ruled that Holodnak had the right to sue to overturn the Arbitrator's decision which in the past had always been "final and binding."

Shortly after that, when Attorney Johnson accepted a teaching job in Boulder, Colorado, he turned the case over to Eugene N. Sosnoff.

On October 4, 1973, Eugene Sosnoff won a partial judgment from U.S. Magistrate, Arthur H. Latimer.

Finally on April 29, 1974, after much preparation, a two day trial was held in U.S. District Court in Bridgeport.

"Having the U.S. Constitution on your side is no guarantee that you'll win," Holodnak said, "especially if you're a worker."

see HOLODNAK page 7

Suggested City Charter Would Beef Up Mayoralty

This is the first part of a two part series which will examine the make up and the potential hazards of the new New Haven City Charter.

by Matt Borenstein
Modern Times Staff

On November 5, three city charter reform questions will appear on the ballot. After about a year of hearings and haggling, we will be presented with a package of charter changes that will on balance increase the power of the mayor and his appointees.

There were some high hopes fluttering around the city last fall when the Board of Aldermen voted to set up a Charter Revision Commission. The two main items in the air were the Board of Education and the Board of Finance.

For years parent groups, the teachers' union and community groups have been seeking an elected Board of Education. Under the current city Charter, the seven members of the Board of Education are appointed by the mayor. The only restriction provided is that not more than four of the appointments can be from the same political party.

Many people in New Haven feel that such an appointed Board is not directly accountable to the public. The Board of Education so constituted can choose to ignore parent demands for improvements in the schools or changes in curriculum. The bitter frustrations of New Haven parents over the past few years and the deterioration of New Haven schools has shown that the Board of Education can ignore parent demands as often as it likes. In fact, for a time last year, the Board of Education tried to keep its meetings as secret as possible and restrict spontaneous public comment during open meetings completely.

Yet the Charter reform questions that will appear on the ballot this November contain no mention of any change in the Board of Education.

No Democracy in Spending

Many hoped that charter reform would bring about some changes in the financial structure of the city. Under the current city charter, a nine-member Board of Finance has almost complete control over the spending of our tax money. This Board includes: the mayor, one alderman, the controller (a city employee!), and six "citizens" appointed by the mayor. This predominantly unelected Board is empowered to draw up the city budget and set the tax rate.

Under the current charter, the elected Board of Aldermen can only vote to reduce the budget (by a two-thirds vote). In addition, if the Board of Aldermen fails to act on the Budget in the one month time alloted, the budget as proposed by the Board of Finance automatically becomes law.

In our state and federal governments, our elected representatives appropriate money and set tax rates. The governor or president is then accountable to our elected representatives for how the money is spent. For example, Nixon did not spend (impounded) a good deal of money that had been appropriated by Congress. Congress sued in Federal court and under our Constitution, forced Nixon to release the funds that had been legally designated for education, anti-pollution and anti-poverty programs.

Under the current structure in New Haven, our elected representatives -- the aldermen -- do not determine how the tax money is to be spent. In fact the mayor, the Board of Finance, or any other city agency does not have to answer to the Board of Aldermen on how the money is spent. The Board of Aldermen is only allowed to "rubber stamp" the Board of Finance.

A Crumb

One charter reform proposal throws a crumb in the direction of financial reform. The proposal (this will appear as Question 6 on the ballot) requires a public hearing on the budget by one week following the first Monday in April. (Previously, the Board of Finance was

see CHARTER page 8

Office Workers Strike CHCP

Fethi Meghelli

Members of Local 466 of the Office and Professionals Employees International Union, AFL-CIO, picket in front of the Community Health Care Plan Cenetr. They are on strike after being offered a paultry 9½ salary increase. This amounts to an increase of about $11 per week for the average worker.

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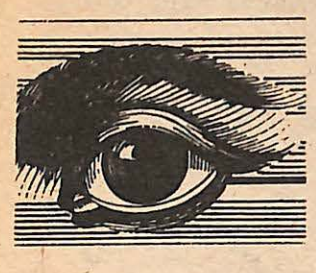
eye on the board



Three Men On The Make

by Andy Esposito
Modern Times Staff

Three New Haven Aldermen have been infected by a virus for which there is no known cure. Its causes are unknown. Yet, its symptoms are easily spotted. People who suffer from this virus, generally referred to as political ambition, run for public office. Or if they hold an elected position, they run for "higher" office. Thus, governors want to become president, congressmen want to become governors, and aldermen want to become state representatives.

These aldermen who have caught the ambition virus are: Alan DeLisle (D-12), Mike Natalino (D-14), and Melvin Esdaile (D-23). In one of the cases, that of DeLisle, the development of the infection has been arrested. However, his aldermanic colleagues, Natalino and Esdaile, are still ailing.

Although they have different backgrounds and personal styles, the ambitious trio has two traits in common. All three are ineffective and mediocre aldermen. Their voting records have been undistinguished, normally a straight party line vote. Moreover, when they take part in any debate they usually fail to add anything to the discussion. It is difficult to imagine a trio less qualified to hold higher office.

DeLisle's Record

The behavior of DeLisle over the last half year has been appalling. He holds the key position of chairperson of the Aldermanic Legislation Committee. In this capacity, the 12th ward Democrat delayed passage of an anti-lead paint law for two months. Then when finally forced to report on the law to the full board, DeLisle made a great show of public support for the bill.

Such behavior doesn't merit reelection to the Board of Aldermen, let alone election to the General Assembly. Fortunately, for us, DeLisle has withdrawn from contention. Yet, the virus of ambition dies hard and in two years time he may again reach for a seat in Hartford.

While DeLisle is out of the picture for 1974, both Esdaile and Natalino remain in. Esdaile is engaged in a primary contest against Irving Stolberg for the Democratic nomination in the 93rd District, located on New Haven's west side. At the same time, Natalino has clear sailing in the 97th District, located in the city's east end.

Natalino and Lead Paint

Because he very rarely takes part in the Board of Aldermen's public debates, it is difficult to obtain any insight into the 14th ward alderman's political thinking. Additionally, since he votes a straight party line, there is nothing in his record to recommend Natalino for higher office.

It would be bad enough if he were just a party hack. However, recently, a more omnious cloud had appeared over Natalino's horizon. On August 14, two residents of a building, located at 142 Putnam Street, owned by Natalino, filed a $2 million suit against him, claiming their children sustained lead paint poisoning.

If true, this is a very serious matter. Especially in light of the fact that the east side Democrat voted in favor of a strong municipal anti-lead paint measure. It will obviously take a long time to resolve the case. Yet, in these post-Watergate days, it would be tragic if New Haveners elected, as State Representative, a person with a mediocre record, over whose head hangs a serious civil law suit.

Do Nothing Esdaile

The hardest of the trio to figure out is Mel Esdaile. He has accomplished almost nothing during his tenure on the board. Now he seeks to replace former political ally Stolberg in the General Assembly. His presence in Hartford wouldn't improve the quality of representation residents of the 93rd District currently enjoy.

Esdaile's apparent reason for running is not some burning desire to be an effective Representative; but because the job pays $6,500 for the first year.

The only positive aspect is that if any of the trio is elected State Representative, then that person could be replaced by a more effective alderman. Given the level of competence DeLisle, Esdaile and Natalino have displayed, finding a capable replacement would be easy.

Community Notes

YWCA Gymnastic Clinic

In preparation for building a new Gymnastic Team, the New Haven YWCA will hold a Gymnastic Clinic September 9-20, meeting Monday through Friday, 3:00-6:00 pm. Ann Geller, Pool and Gym Director, will coach the clinic in the gymnasium at 48 Howe Street. Greater New Haven area girls age 6-18 of all skill levels are welcome.

The YWCA Gymnastic Team, to be organized after the Gymnastic Clinic, will be a member of the Region I Gymnastic League of YWCA's in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey. The League has planned workshops and meets throughout the fall and winter. The YWCA Team will be a great way to make new friends, to work with old friends, and to do some traveling. The thrill of competition and new skills will be the reward for girls' time dedicated to the Gymnastic Team.

Women's Studies

This fall, for the first time, the University of New Haven is offering the course, "Women in Society," in Wallingford. The thirteen-week course which begins Tuesday morning, September 17, at the First Baptist Church Parish House located at 114 North Main Street in Wallingford, can be taken for college credit or personal enrichment. Classes will be held from 9:00 am to 11:30 am for thirteen consecutive Tuesdays, September 17 through December 10.

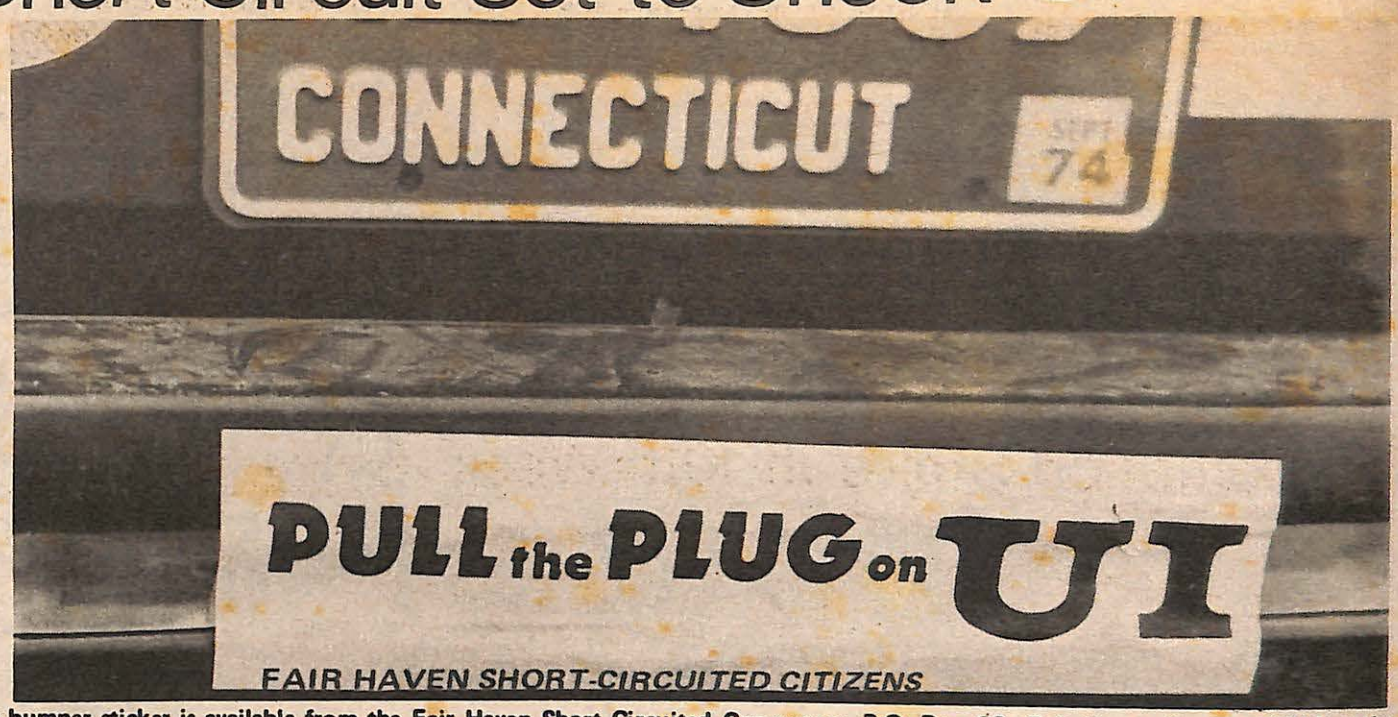
"Women in Society" is being offered in Wallingford as the result of a comprehensive survey of women in the New Haven suburban area conducted by UNH under the direction of Carole Aiken, Director of Women's Affairs. The survey response indicated that area women would be very interested in an academic opportunity if adequate child care facilities were provided and if they had access to educational and career counseling.

New Occupational Safety and Hygiene Program

A new program in Occupational Safety and Hygiene has been scheduled for the Fall semester at the University of New Haven. Dr. Douglas Robillard, Dean of the University's school of arts and sciences, said the program has been designed to meet the specialized demands in the field of safety in 124 semester credit hours leading to a bachelor of science degree.

"The safety engineer, in performing the functions now demanded by the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSHA), must have knowledge of physics, chemistry, mathematics, biology, management principles, thebehavioral sciences, and business practices, as well as the basics of the engineering disciplines," Dean Robillard said, adding, "He must also be educated in such applied science aspects of safety and health as industrial hygiene, fire science technology, and environmental health."

Short Circuit Set to Shock UI



Nick Heyer

This bumper sticker is available from the Fair Haven Short Circuited Consumers, P.O. Box 99, Fair Haven Station 06513 at the 25 cents.

by Gary Benenson
Modern Times Staff

"Everyone's complaining about inflation, but nobody's doing anything about it." This statement used to be true but it isn't anymore. A group of Fair Haven residents have recently decided to do something about one of the most painful varieties of inflation -- sky high electric bills.

Calling themselves the Fair Haven Short-Circuited Consumers, the group formed itself in early July at a meeting in the Fair Haven Middle School. More than 50 people attended this first meeting. People spoke of how their electric bills had actually doubled in the past year. Many people were paying more for "Fuel Adjustment Cost" than for the rest of their bills. They felt as though they were being taken to the cleaners by U.I. Even State Sen. Ciarlone, who was one of the only public officials present at the meeting, said that he himself didn't know what to do.

So the 50 Fair Haveners decided to take action themselves. They formed the group, and set themselves two goals: (1) To end the Fuel Cost Adjustment; and (2) ultimately, to have the City take over all electric service.

In the following weeks, the group began working toward these goals. They set up an information table in front of three neighborhood supermarkets where they sold 600 bumper stickers reading "PULL THE PLUG ON U.I." and collected 3,000 signatures on a petition calling on public officials to end the Fuel Cost Adjustment. Twenty members of the group attended a State Public Utilities Commission (P.U.C.) hearing at Lee High School on July 25, and four of them spoke publicly against the Fuel Cost Adjustment.

Legal Takeover by City

In the meantime, the group launched a research Committee to look into the hows and whys of city takeover. They found that city takeover of a utility has been legal in Connecticut for over 60 years. It requires a 2/3 vote by the Board of Aldermen, signature by the mayor in both of two consecutive years, and then a vote by the majority of registered voters in the next general election. That sounds like a lot of work, but the Fair Haven Short-Circuited Consumers feel that it would be worth the trouble. If the 2,000 municipally owned systems are any guide, city ownership would mean: (1) electric rates cut by 1/3; (2) lower city taxes; and (3) a public service run by and for the public, not for private profit.

The Fair Haven Short Circuited Consumers have many plans on the drawing board. The next month's activities include: a picket-demonstration at the U.I. headquarters on Temple Street, attendance at further P.U.C. hearings, and visits to candidates for the State Legislature. For the long range, the group is planning a citywide educational campaign on the benefits of city takeover.

Membership in the Fair Haven Short Circuited Consumers is open to any interested person. For further information, write the Fair Haven Short-Circuited Consumers, P. O. Box 99, Fair Haven Station 06513.

Van Heusen Takes it on the Cuff From NH Labor

by David Wessel
Modern Times Staff

During the 1940's, Van Heusen shirts were made in Pennsylvania. It was right after the Depression and conditions for working people were gradually improving. Phillips-Van Heusen apparently didn't want improved working conditions, so, when it came time to expand, it looked around for a cheaper source of labor. Van Heusen looked for an area where living standards were low, and there were no unions, like rural towns in Alabama, Arkansas and Mississippi.

But living standards were not low enough there either, so Phillips-Van Heusen turned to overseas factories in Hong Kong, where it could pay wages of only 50 cents per hour. And today, not satisfied with the situation in Hong Kong, Van Heusen has moved production to Taiwan, where factory workers get 25 cents an hour.

Clothing Workers React

Fighting a multi-national corporation is no easy task, but the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA) - the union representing most American shirt-makers - has taken on Phillips-Van Heusen just as it took on Farah Pants. The ACWA has launched a national campaign to boycott Van Heusen shirts.

One major theme of the boycott is, "Who Benefits from Phillips-Van Heusen's Crusade for a Lower Standard of Living?" American workers do not benefit because job opportunities are being exported to other countries. Already, shops in New York and Pennsylvania have shut down.

Workers in Hong Kong and Taiwan do not benefit, because their standard of living is not improving. Strikes and unions are illegal there, and workers have no bargaining power and little job security. When Van Heusen saw that labor was cheaper in Taiwan than Hong Kong, they simply expanded their operations in Taiwan.

Americans Suffer

American consumers do not benefit either. They are paying *American-made prices* for lower quality merchandise made by poorly paid workers. And, in addition, as American job opportunities are exported and domestic factories close, the local tax base of American communities shrinks and these communities are hurt.

Then who does benefit? Only Larry Phillips - the president of Van Heusen - and his stockholders!

Phillips-Van Heusen's long search for lower wages has made it a formidable threat to the rest of the brand-name shirt industry, including New Haven's Sero, Gant and Par-ex companies, which employ over 1000 workers in the New Haven area. The competitive advantage of Van Heusen - which is the second largest firm in the industry - has become a major factor when it comes time to renegotiate shirt industry contracts at plants like those in New Haven. For this reason, ACWA is investing a great deal of time, energy and money in the Van Heusen boycott campaign.

New Tactics

The campaign in Connecticut is using a strategy new to the labor movement, a strategy more common to election campaigns. The ACWA seeks the support of consumers as well as the area's organized labor movement. More than 100,000 consumers have been reached by mailings, door-to-door canvassing, and by folllow-up telephoning. ACWA staffers and volunteers have been speaking at union meetings and picketing Van Heusen-owned retail stores like Kennedy's in the Chapel Square Mall and other stores which carry Van Heusen products. Radio advertising is in the planning stage and a ninety-minute film -- called "So Long, It's Been Good to Know You" -- is available at no charge from ACWA Local No. 125, which is headquartered in New Haven.

Leafletting in New Haven

A number of organized plants in the New Haven and Bridgeport areas have been leafleted by the ACWA. Betsy Murray, a New Haven resident who is coordinating the plant-gate leafletting, said, "We've been leafletting every morning since late July and we've been getting a really good reception and a lot of support from local union leadership. At the telephone company, the first man to receive a leaflet one morning read it, nodded, and told me, 'That's right. My boy works down at Gant's, and we've got to support our men here'."

In New Haven, the ACWA has distributed leaflets to Gant's, G&O, Whitney-Blake, Safety Electric, Knights of Columbus, Sargent, Blakeslee, and -- through the local union leadership -- at Olin-Winchester and Seamless Rubber. Early morning New York commuters received leaflets as they boarded trains in New Haven one morning.

Ray Rogers

The Connecticut campaign is being coordinated by Ray Rogers, a Massachusetts native who worked on the Farah Pants boycott in Alabama and on the campaign of Arnold Miller for the presidency of the United Mine Workers. "The campaign in Connecticut," Rogers said, "is still low-key and we haven't gotten the words out to everybody, but through our radio advertising and our future expanded efforts, we should be able to reach every person in the state."

In a letter mailed to thousands of Connecticut residents, State Labor Council (AFL-CIO) President John Driscoll noted, "The clothing industry has been the point of entry for millions of low-skilled and minority group persons to jobs which helped them to become productive members of society. Now their jobs are being exported while the products they were making are being imported at no savings to the American consumer."

Response to Letter

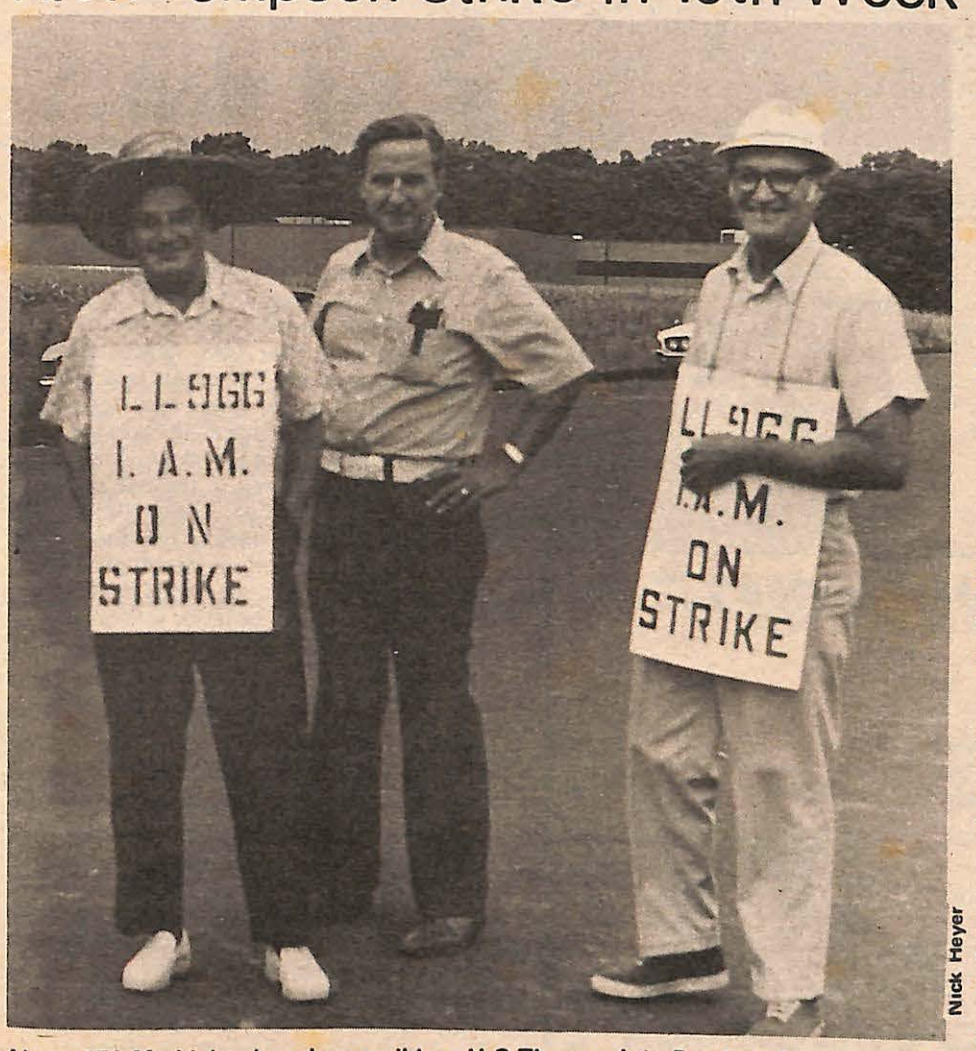
Rogers says the response to Driscoll's letter has been overwhelmingly positive. He added, " In our follow-up telephoning the majority of people who identified themselves as working in Van Heusen-owned stores said they agreed with the union and would not buy these shirts themselves. They said they'd like to help in the campaign but couldn't because they were afraid of losing their jobs."

According to Betsy Murray, the local boycott campaign has already received the active support of a number of regional offices of international unions, AFL-CIO Central Labor Councils and local unions including the electrical workers, rubber workers, machinists, autoworkers, brassworkers, and steelworkers. The telephone workers, office and professional workers, papermakers, teamsters, chemical workers, teachers, retail clerks, hotel and restaurant employees, and several independent unions have also given support.

Nick Heyer

Jennie Alfano and Sophie DeFeleppo of Local 125 A.C.W.A. distribute information about the Union's campaign to boycott Van Heusen shirts. The Union is protesting the company's efforts to undermine its employees standard of living.

H.G.Thompson Strike in 10th Week



Nick Heyer

About 150 Machinists have been sr iking H.G.Thomson's in Branford for tenn weeks. The major issues concern job definition which effects the wage scale of the workers. Picketers felt there has been no real effort to settle on the part of the Company.

Labor Notes

Labor Note - Yale-Local 35 Fact Finding

Both Yale and Local 35 have handed in their briefs to the fact-finder, although Yale's was received two weeks after it was originally due. On Monday, August 19, 1974, both sides presented their reply briefs. The next steps are hearings scheduled for September 10-11.

Workers Reject Contract

The Classified Employees Union, Local 884, AFSCME, AFL-CIO, has voted to reject the latest contract offered them by the City of New Haven. The main disagreements are centered around wages and benefits. Further, negotiations are in process and MODERN TIMES will report any new changes in future issues.

Lettuce, Grapes 'Kosher'

Boston -- A rabbinical board here has classified as non-kosher any lettuce or table grapes not picked by members of the United Farm Workers, forbidding their consumption by members of 120 Jewish congregations in the state.

"The men came back firmly convinced that (UFW President) Cesar Chavez was correct and deserved our support," Rabbi Meyer Strassfeld said. "They found that the health of the workers was endangered, because they were not treated well. Oppression of laborers is forbidden by Torah (the ancient Jewish law of the Old Testament)."

editorial

Don't Let Him Go-Jail to the Chief

The latest Nixon Tapes clearly indicate that he knew of the Watergate break-in several months before he had previously acknowledged. In addition, he and Haldeman devised a plan to have the CIA abort the FBI's probe into the Watergate affair.

Mr. Nixon then proceeded to cover up the whole scandal. He told his lawyer, his supporters on the House Judiciary Committee and the American people that he knew nothing of the break-in or the cover up; and was employing the FBI to investigate.

We now know the depth of his involvement in these crimes. Under our system of justice, there is rarely equality in treatment. Had any other American citizen been charged with the same offences, that individual would receive 30 years in prison and a fine of $50,000.

Yet, if we allow Nixon and his henchmen to get away without a trial, we are insuring that our future will again be clouded with activities designed to secure the position of the leaders in power. Mr. Nixon has definitely violated the law. He and those like him, should not escape without punishment for their criminal activities.

No, Ford Doesn't Have Better Idea

The canonization of Gerald R. Ford has begun. Political opinion makers, in the media, and congressional leaders are intoning hymns of praise to the new President's virtues.

We are told that Ford really believes it when he speaks of Free Enterprise and the American way of life as being the one true path to the good life; that he consults with many people before making a decision, and we should be grateful to finally have a President with these traits.

However, we should not allow our relief over getting rid of Nixon to blind us to the real Ford. When in congress he voted against Medicare, housing bills, increases in the minimum wage, and the poverty program. The new President was so anti-progress, he was called "one of the wooden soldiers of the status quo." Ford is, truly, a politican and social model T.

Also, upon close examination, what the new administration offers working people is more of the same. The same conservative fiscal policy expounded by Nixon, the same heartless "let them eat less" philosophy of Agriculture Secretary Earl Butz, the same Pentagon-oriented budget, the same handouts to corporations, and the same stinginess toward working people who sorely need help in these days of superinflation.

Thus, it is obvious that the real power hasn't passed. For Gerald Ford has the same close ties to the military-industrial complex as his predessors Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon. Both Republicans and Democrats answer to the same corporate masters. Consequently, although a new person resides at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, working people will continue to receive the short end of the stick.

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MODERN TIMES welcomes all comments and letters to the editors.

MODERN TIMES is published by the American Independent Movement (AIM) as its political organ. Work on MODERN TIMES is done by volunteers, both members and non-members of AIM. The political views of AIM are given in the editorial. We encourage contributions from the New Haven community in the form of articles and letters.

MODERN TIMES is a paper to tell the story of and by the people of New Haven. We don't get this kind of news from profit-making commercial papers. There is no place else in New Haven where the problems of working men and women are told by them instead of their bosses. There is no place else where the problems of employment and education, and housing and health care are told by the people who have to live with them.

This is the richest country in the world. Yet most of the wealth is used only by a few. We must all work together to claim the wealth we all helped to create. There would be no need to strike for paltry raises, waste our resources and labor on missiles and bombs, or waste the lives of our young men in wars like Vietnam. We would produce what we need, not what is profitable.

The American Independent Movement has been working since 1966 to get people together against the vested interests that run New Haven and the whole country. We want everyone to have good housing, good education, child care centers, recreation areas, decent health care, and decent jobs.

STAFF:
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Will Amer. Labor Survive the Coming Crash?
money talks

by Rick Wolff
Modern Times Staff

"Inflation-Depression/Nixon-Rockefeller

It is always risky to make predictions, especially about where the US economy is heading. But right now is one of those moments in history when it is downright dangerous. And yet, now is also a time when the economy and the livings of millions of Americans are on so shaky a footing, that some try at peeking into the near future is a must if people are to make plans and take the actions needed to save themselves from economic ruin.

So here goes one prediction. It's not a sure thing, but from following closely the economics of the US for the last few years and considering the Ford/Rockefeller "team", I would have to say the chances are better than 50-50.

Before explaining it, let me just state it. Because the current price inflation is steadily becoming too burdensome for business as well as working people, poor people, old people and students, the corporation leaders and their political allies are planning a solution to the problem which will protect their interests. The solution for inflation has been and will now again be depression. This depression will see an end to rapid price rises and maybe even some price cuts. This will be achieved by all the old tried and true methods. The large companies will lay off hundreds of thousands of workers. Medium and small firms will collapse as customers disappear, interest rates remain high and the big firms steal more of their business to keep themselves going. Loan companies and banks (usually the middle and smaller ones) will totter as more and more borrowers stop being able to keep up their payments. The city, state and federal governments, faced with falling tax receipts, will add to unemployment rolls by firing many of their employees.

Unspeakable Problems

A depression means unemployment. It will rise, probably to levels quite like the current "unprecedented" sky-high interest rates: 10-12%. There will be massive suffering as unemployment benefits and welfare are put under especially heavy strain just as fewer and fewer people are paying the taxes that finance them. Programs for the unemployed and the poor will shrink even further, plunging many cities and rural areas into unspeakable kinds of problems. Eviction, repossession, bankruptcy, default will return to the everyday language of most Americans.

Not a happy picture, yet the business leaders have, I believe, convinced themselves and Washington that the pain (which they won't feel) is worth the result (from which they will benefit most). That result is an end to inflation, the ability of US goods to be sold better abroad, the ability of big US firms to buy up cheaply the assets of the bankrupt middle and smaller firms.

The most important result they seek is, however, a way to avoid paying the higher wages that American workers are demanding these days. This they hope to accomplish in two ways. First, they will say that the end of inflation removes "the need" for catch-up wage increases. Second, and more importantly, they will use the millions of unemployed as a club to threaten workers: "either accept these wages, or we'll hire one of those unemployed who will."

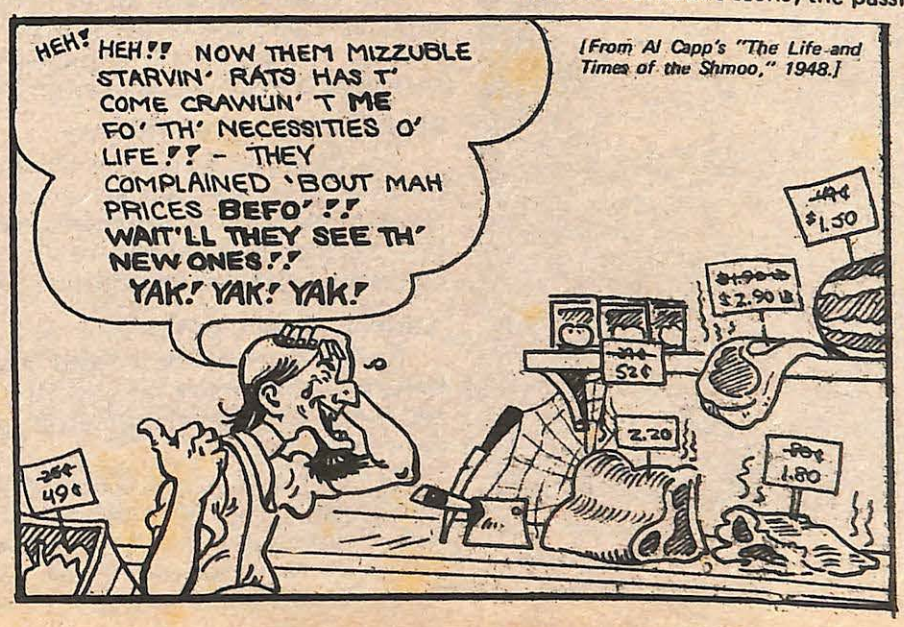
From the economic scene, the passing of Nixon/Ford to Ford/Rockefeller, makes sense. Watergate made Nixon too weak and unpopular to carry through the tough policy of depression. It would have been too much, and might have roused the American people to a level of anger and protest frightening to big businessmen and Washington alike. A depression, if it is to be "successful" for those who need it, must seem to be a national affair, a policy of a united, determined, popular leadership and people. For this Nixon was worse than no good.

Friendly Ford and Rich Uncle Rocky

Ford -- the average nice guy -- with "no enemies" in Congress and the money, connections and "liberal" Rockefeller beside him was a much better bet. No Republican politician has as good a history of comfortable alliances with organized labor as does Rockefeller in New York. Since business does not trust the Democrats (with their potential for giving power to strange ducks like McGovern), Rockefeller was the perfect choice for Vice President. Then, too, if you believe money, in the end, can buy everything, well, then, Rockefeller and his friends have the money to buy the support and the public relations to pull off a depression. Certainly, the stock market's down-down-down behavior reflects this view of what lies ahead in the immediate next few years.

"Your friend Ford and his rich uncle Rocky. They understand how you feel. And they've got what it takes to solve our economic problems."

As with the wage-price freezes and controls of a few years ago, the big question is: will labor buy it? Will American workers suffer a depression the way they suffered the last three years of rising prices far outrunning their wages? Or will they decide that the companies and politicians who brought us inflation can no longer be trusted with any leadership? Is it finally going to be the right time to form new political movements and parties of, by and for the broad working class of America?


HEH! HEH!! NOW THEM MIZZUBLE STARVIN' RATS HAS T' COME CRAWLIN' T ME FO' TH' NECESSITIES O' LIFE!! - THEY COMPLAINED 'BOUT MAH PRICES BEFO'!! WAIT'LL THEY SEE TH' NEW ONES!! YAK! YAK! YAK!
[From Al Capp's "The Life and Times of the Shmoo," 1948.]
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brass tacks

Labor Unions Must Take Active Role

by Mike F. Holodnak
Modern Times Staff

Corporate management from the junior executives on up, trained like circus seals to manipulate people, not only know nothing about the production process to which they are mostly disruptive, but they are also a big drain with their unnecessary salaries. And the stockholders are even worse, many of them do not even know where the plants are located.

Yet all the decisions on what is to be manufactured, how it is to be manufactured, what quality, what price and in all too many instances what kind of working conditions will prevail, are all determined wholly by management. Management considers these powers as rights ordained to them by God in heaven, and they call these rights, company prerogatives. Workers, on the other hand, call them company stupidity and incompetence.

But, because most laws favor corporations and the rest are often bought off by corporations, workers are at a distinct disadvantage.

Companies Take Advantage

Companies, taking advantage of these legal and illegal powers, swindle workers and consumers almost with impunity.

In the factories, for example, management will continually violate provisions of a labor agreement simply because the penalties to the companies are inconsequential while the benefits are enormous. By overloading the grievance procedure, individual grievances become impossible to process properly and the entire procedure is transformed into a vicious treadmill that sows discontentment among the union members and runs union stewards and shop committeemen into exhaustion, not to mention the heavy drain on the Local's treasury in lost time and arbitration payments.

Now then, since workers, when they are charged with violations or infractions of company rules, are punished with reprimands, firings and even black ballings, why shouldn't the same punishment apply to the companies? If a company official violates the labor agreement a certain number of times, he too should be fired.

In short, unless a labor agreement is a two way street, it's not worth the paper it's printed on.

Labor's Improvements only Temporary

Also, each time labor goes into negotiations it gets only a temporary improvement in the total package. Though wages and pensions are very important to workers it gives them only a short chance to catch their breath till the multinationals again pick workers' pockets clean with high prices and high inflation-inducing jingoistic foreign policies designed to protect the millionaires' overseas investments.

As for pensions, all their lives workers work hard because they are led to believe that "things will be better." But today, with thousands of new and dangerous materials and chemicals, working conditions are worse than ever. Many of the older workers are finding themselves working harder and more hours today than they did when they were in their 20's.

This is the reason why companies would rather settle for better pensions than a shorter work week. Companies know from the statistics that many workers will be dead or prematurely disabled long before they even begin collecting on their pension.

Slogans are Lies

The slogan that says we are the "richest country in the world" rings hollow in the face of reality. Only the rich are rich while the majority of the American people are struggling unsuccessfully to hold together body and soul.

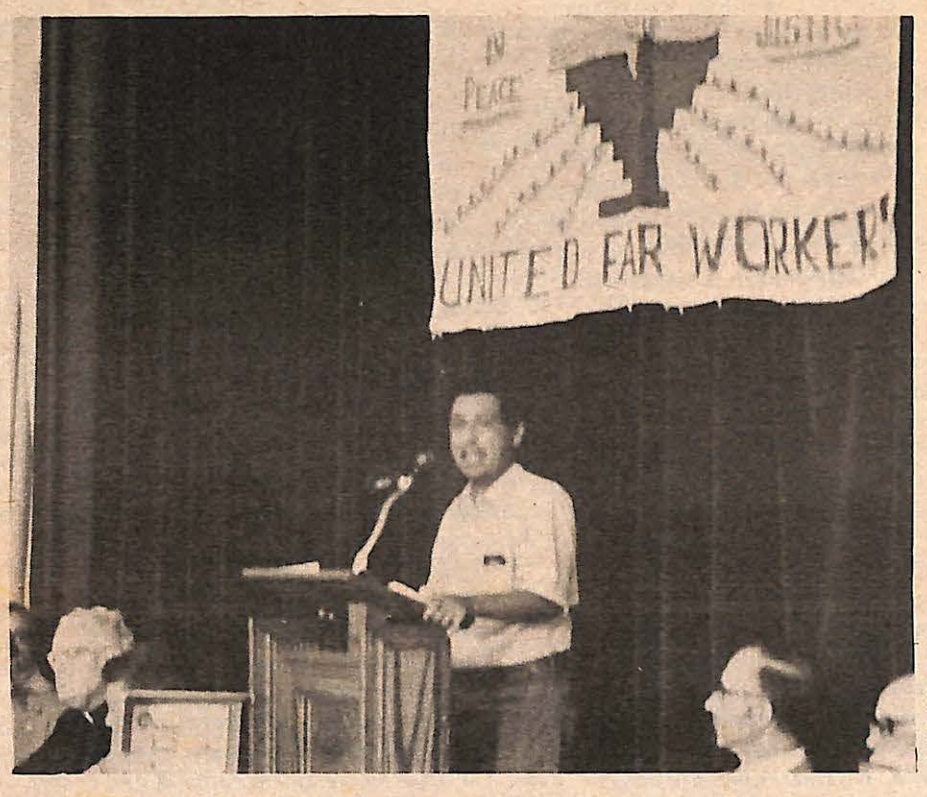
Look at the facts. Of all the countries in the world, we're number one in military power and in luxurious yachts owned by the rich who wallow in champagne and caviar. But, we're only number eight in doctor-patient ratio, number 14 in literacy, number 14 in infant mortality and number twenty-five in life expectancy.

As long as the giant monopoly robber barons maintain their stranglehold on this country, making it easy for only crooks and liars to get into public office, they will continue to loot this country into bankruptcy.

That's why labor can no longer afford to bargain for only the traditional raises-and-pensions contracts. Labor must think the unthinkable and do the undoable and end company prerogatives with their attendant master-slave relations by demanding a voice in the production process. Only then will labor be able to create full employment by reducing the work week, and stop the deliberate waste by ending built-in obsolescence, and begin working toward a sane and honest society.

Chavez Spurs Farmworker Support

Ceasar Chavez, President of the United Farm Workers of America and Rev. Joseph F. Donnelly address a group of 500 supporters at a lunchon held on Aug. 1st. Chavez stated that there are no Union grapes being sold anywhere. He also pointed out that no matter what the brand name; all wines bottled in Mosdesto Calf. are made by Gallo and should not be purchased.



Nick Heyer

Nick Heyer

write on

To the Editors

Dear Sirs:

I was glad to read that the Board of Aldermen passed a new lead paint ordinance on June 3, 1974. However, while this ordinance empowers the Department of Health to inspect any dwelling in which a child is found to have lead poisoning, and to order the removal of all lead paint that may be accessible to children, it does not basically force the prevention of lead poisoning. What about the first child to become poisoned? This child is actually being used as a tool of the lead paint screening process instead of chemical tests and visual inspection. This approach is akin to not putting up traffic lights at intersections until one person is killed or injured, thus proving how dangerous the intersection is, and then only erecting a light at that particular intersection. Surely a much more sincere approach to the prevention of lead poisoning would be for the Department of Health to systematically inspect, test, and repair all buildings where children live before even one child is poisoned.

Susanne Harris
216 Fountain Street
New Haven, Connecticut

To the Editors:

Dear Sir:

As an active trade unionist, I find MODERN TIMES comprehensive in presenting the issues confronting the labor Movement, as well as interpreting the attacks which threaten the security of all workers who inhabit our market place and cry out for a better way of life.

MODERN TIMES is a moral laxative, which examines, exposes, and challenges the intestinal guts of our immoral society.

Enclosed please find my subscription renewal.

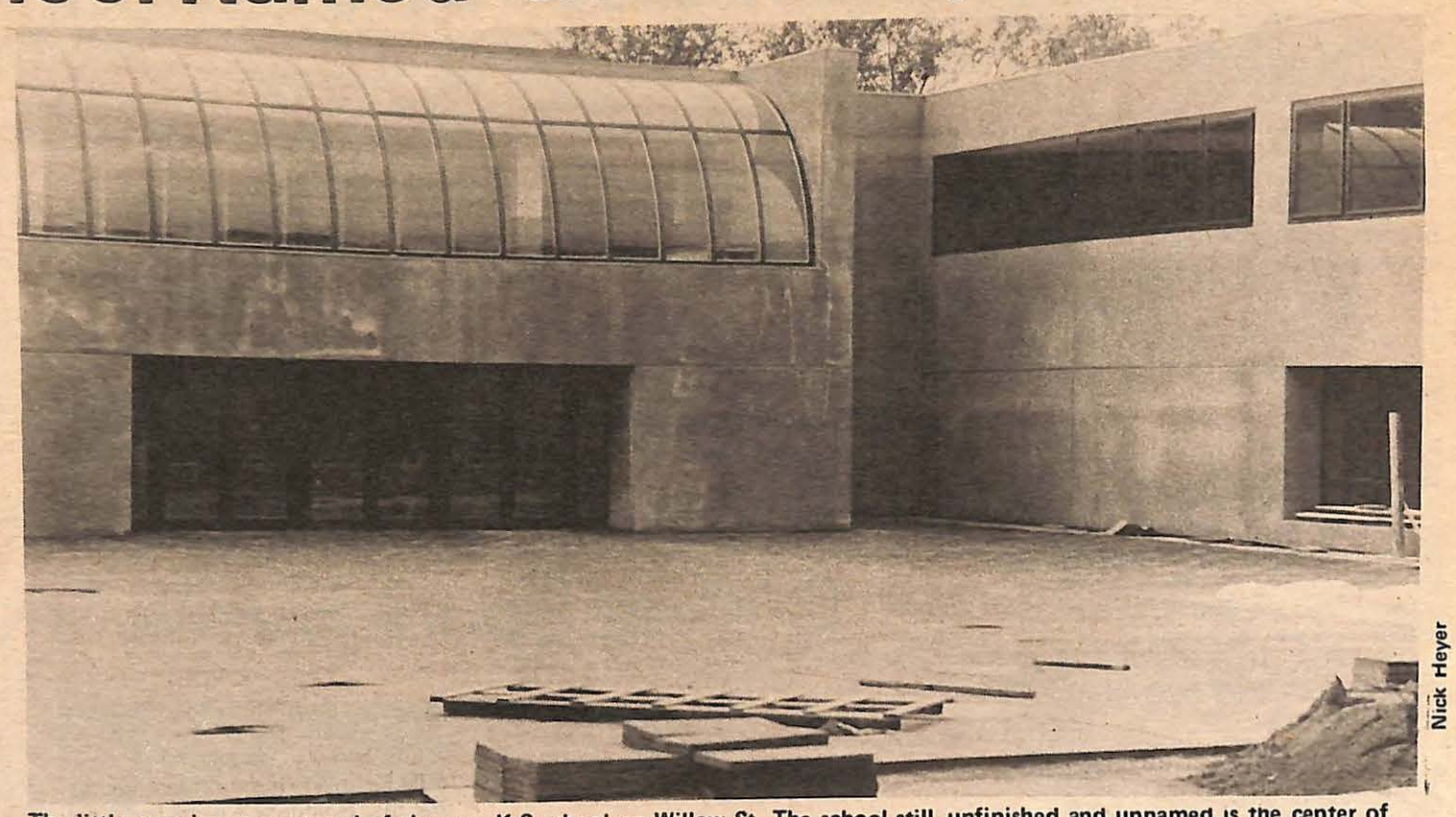
RIGHT ON to MODERN TIMES.

John T. Williams (Teamsters)
5424 Harcross Drive
Los Angeles, Calif. 90043

school notes

School Named Guida Despite Protest

by Ruth Hein



Nick Heyer

The little seen inner courtyard of the new K-8 school on Willow St. The school,still unfinished and unnamed is the center of much controversy.

While summer vacation closed the schools, the Board of Education continued in business. Three fairly interesting items have come up in the last two months.

It has long been taken for granted that the Mayor would not reappoint Phyllis Medvedow when her term ends. General feeling about Mrs. Medvedow varied a good deal. She was viewed with some suspicion at the outset. Leon Medvedow, her husband, is the city clerk, and his printing business usually winds up with Board of Education contracts. But Mrs. Medvedow herself got a ruling from the city ethics board and was given a clean bill of health (whatever that means). Subsequently she became the target of a rather nasty campaign to replace white middle-class Board members. To other groups, however, she appeared hardworking and fair.

I too did not expect a great deal from Mrs. Medvedow when she was first appointed. But as I saw her functioning at Board meetings and occasionally in committee, I came to have great respect for her intelligence and commitment. When she took her stand, it was always informed and often compassionate.

For once Mayor Guida did not wait until the last minute, he has already announced Mrs. Medvedow's replacement, in spite, or perhaps because, of the many letters he has received urging her reappointment. David Echter, who will take her seat in September, is not a surprising choice. By New Haven's political wisdom, one member of the Board should be Jewish and should live in Westville. Mr. Echter fulfills both these odd requirements. His appointment to the Board again gives men a massive majority--only two out of seven members are now women. I know nothing about Mr. Echter personally and will have to see what his contribution to Board decisions is.

Affirmative Action

Even during the summer, some little progress has been made on the schools' long-overdue affirmative action program. The committee charged with hammering out a viable program dragged its heels for the best part of the year, until it was augmented by outside members, who immediately set to work examining statistics and personnel records. They came up with a target figure of just under 30 percent of minority personnel, reflecting employment figures in New Haven and serving as a compromise between the pitifully low figure set by the school people and the utopian figure asked for by some sections of the community.

At the July meeting, this figure was brought to the Board for approval. After several hours of demeaning carping and frivolous questions (not all from white Board members, either), the Board did vote to accept the target percentage. The committee is thus safe in its further efforts to work out implementation, and it is to be hoped that soon this commitment will be reflected by some appointments.

Naming a School

The third piece of business deals with the name of the new K-8 school in the East Rock area. The community's choice--East Rock Community School--has been heavily endorsed, both by neighborhood people, who have freely signed petitions, and by involved alderpeople. Suddenly, however, the name "Guida School" came out of nowhere, and just as suddenly and mysteriously the Board was in possession of petitions endorsing that choice. As a letter to the **Register** by John Esposito made clear, Stephen Papa himself is deeply committed to the Guida name. Papa has gone in for a lot of stonewalling on the issue, but it does not look good for the East Rock name.

Summing Up

This, then, is where matters stand as the new school year begins: one minus--unresponsiveness to the community; one plus--a little progress on affirmative action; and one imponderable--the new Board member.

New Haven Rape Crisis Center Opens

July 5, 1974 -- Organizers of the New Haven Rape Crisis Center announce that the Center's services are now available to all women in the greater New Haven area. The Rape Crisis Center operates a 24-hour crisis line (397-CARE) to offer supportive services and medical and legal information to women who have been raped or sexually attacked. The women who staff the crisis line are sympathetic and informed about rape. They are familiar with the medical and legal steps to be followed in the event of rape, as well as being in contact with professional consultants.

The goals of the Rape Crisis Center are to provide support to rape victims, educate women about prevention and self-defense and inform the general public about rape and its seriousness to all women in this society.

The Center will offer both immediate and long-term services, according to coordinators Christa Hansen and Cookie Polan. "We plan to help women through the trying aftermath of rape, to befriend them during the medical examination and police questioning, support them if they wish to prosecute, and help these women deal with those people who mistakenly see the victim as being responsible for the rape," Ms. Hansen said.

Another priority of the group, according to Ms. Polan, is to teach women self-defense techniques. "In addition," she said, "we want to see an end to laws and courtroom procedures which discriminate against women by assuming that they are liars and that they somehow want to be raped."

Women wishing to work with the Rape Crisis Center can contact the group by calling the 24-hour phone number, 397-CARE.

For more information, contact Cookie Polan (562-9931, 397-2273) or Christa Hansen (562-8166, 397-2273).

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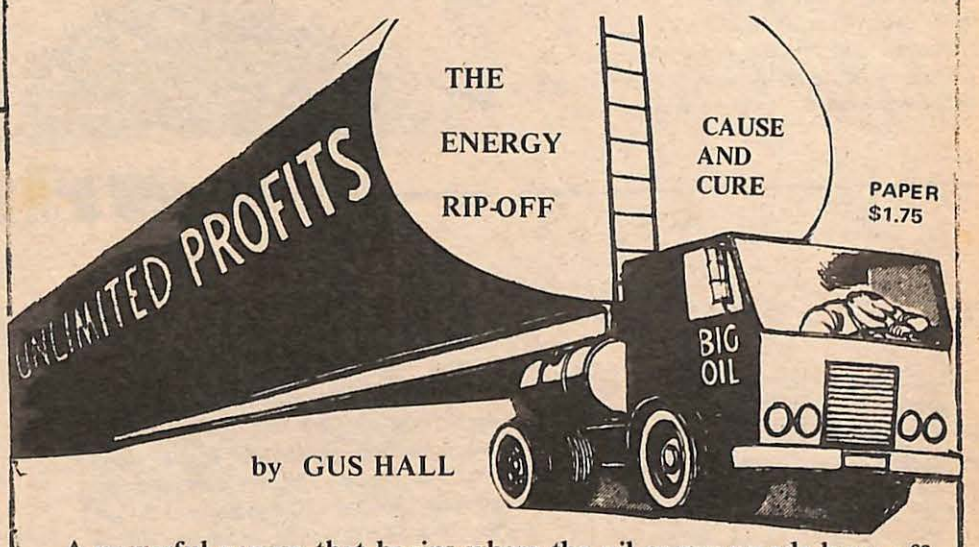


by GUS HALL

A powerful expose that begins where the oil company ads leave off, proving a monopoly conspiracy to contrive the "energy crisis." Gus Hall spells out a program to bring "power to the people."

NEW WORLD BOOKSTORE 37 HOWE ST. NEW HAVEN

Govt Sabotages OSHA

New Haven Occupational Health and Safety Project

Recent news from Washington regarding the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) bears out our worst suspicions about the effectiveness of the administrative process, the legal network of agencies and commissions which have the primary responsibility of overseeing corporate activity. The Nixon-Ford decision to reduce federal non-defense spending is claiming as its first victims OSHA and the Environmental Protection Agency. A doctor working for the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the research arm of OSHA, recently resigned because of personal frustration over the lack of governmental commitment to protecting the health and safety of the country's workers.

OSHA has requested that NIOSH no longer recommend specific limits in their criteria documents setting permissible exposures to occupational hazards. Apparently OSHA was embarrassed, because the limits it wanted to include in standards were so much higher than those recommended by NIOSH. In fact, only one NIOSH criteria document (for asbestos) has been used by OSHA to issue a standard in the three years since OSHA was established. Also, fines for violating the standards continue to be irresponsibly low; appeals have been taken by corporate violators at every conceivable point in the judicial process, resulting in new final decisions against the corporations.

History Tells Tale

Understanding the dismal state of OSHA activities requires an appreciation not only of politics in Washington, but also of the history of administrative law. As a general rule, the amount of governmental regulation of our daily affairs, our work situation, and our economic resources has increased over the past 200 years. However, government regulation of corporations and their activities, while it has steadily increased, has been ambivalent, and in many cases, totally ineffectual.

For example, the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, one of the first pieces of federal legislation aimed at controlling big business, was intended to declare monopolies illegal. Big business at first opposed the legislation Then, after finding that public outrage over the practices of the monopolies was too great to stop passage of some type of regulation, business came out in support of an anti-trust measure that was too weak to jeopardize corporate interests. The success of this strategy was soon evident. The Sherman bill, in its final form, was a far cry from what the public wanted. An administration commission, chaired by friends of the corporations, was set up to enforce the act. During its first twenty years, the only people busted for being in restraint of trade were the unions! The robber barons increased their leverage in dealing with labor as a result of a bill aimed at limiting corporate power.

Even in those instances where public outrage reached the boiling point, the corporations wriggled out of the corner. This is clear in the case of the food and drug industries in the early part of this century. Milk containing arsenic, diseased meats, drugs without any benefits, or worse, drugs which killed the consumer, were sold every day across grocery and drug store counters. Exposure of the evils in these industries led to a demand for effective government regulation. At first, there was talk of sending the presidents of the companies to jail.

Conditions Deteriorate

However, when the corporations had finished lobbying, a bill, the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906, was finally passed, setting up another administrative commission. No one responsible for poisoning the public went to jail. At best, rotten meat was confiscated and improperly labeled drugs were sent back to manufacturers to be relabeled. If anything, conditions were worse than before, because the mere presence of an administrative agency with the power to regulate the food and drug industries put the public's mind at rest and served to undermine future efforts to force the legal system to deal effectively with corporate criminals.

Recent developments in the area of occupational safety and health and administrative regulation parallel the story of food and drug control of sixty years ago. It was not until labor unions brought to public attention that people were dying every day from work related diseases and injuries, that Congress passed a bill to regulate conditions at the workplace. As in the cases of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act, big business was at first opposed to legislation in any form. When it became obvious that public sentiment was too great and the labor lobby too organized to be stopped from getting some bill through, big business pushed for provisions which would dilute the bill's strength and limit its reach.

The law which was passed, the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, reflects the continued success of this strategy. The bill has set up another administrative commission to handle all aspects of occupational safety and health. And, like the Interstate Commerce Commission, which pursued the unions under the Sherman Act, and like the FDA that did not see fit to punish the food and drug companies which poisoned countless Americans, OSHA has done little to accomplish what the public has asked for from its legal processes.

The major point to be drawn from the repeated failings of the administrative process is that workers must be aware of how OSHA works to management's advantage. That is the subject of the second article in this two-part series.

Colors Lighten H.S. Reading Course

For 16 teachers in the New Haven area, school started early this year. High School in the Community sponsored a one-week workshop on the teaching of reading through Words in Color August 12-16 at the Dixwell Community House. Dr. Dorthea Hinman of Educational Solutions in New York City lead the workshop, which included five HSC teachers, as well as others from New Haven and West Haven schools and the Adult Basic Education Program of New Haven.

George Foote, Facilitator at HSC, said "We are pleased to make this in-service training available. We feel that Words in Color is an excellent program, and it seems altogether appropriate that as an alternative school in New Haven, we should share our resources and insights with other interested members of the educational community."

New York Pops

Words in Color, an approach developed by Dr. Caleb Gattegno, is best known nationally through its one-minute spots, called Pop-Ups, which were seen originally on NBC television. It has been used with great success in several inner-city programs in New York City, most recently in the new Twin Parks Elementary School in the South Bronx, where, after one year, student reading scores were raised one or two grade levels while city wide reading scores remained the same or showed very slight increases or decreases.

In the New Haven school system many individual teachers have found it to be highly effective in the teaching of reading in their own classrooms. The High School in the Community has received a Title 7 U.S. government grant for $15,000 to implement this approach in the school during the coming academic year.

Holadnak KO's Avco

continued from page 1

"I've got to admit it," Holodnak continued, "Sosnoff did a terrific job at the trial. He had the well-armed company lawyers reeling with his logic which was devastating and unassailable."

Joelle Fishman Dominski testified at the trial that Holodnak's firing had a chilling effect on freedom of expression in terms of contributing articles to AIM Newsletter.

Victory at Last

Judge Lumbard had affirmed most of the claims made by Sosnoff. The company was found guilty of violating the rights to "freedom of speech," the Arbitrator was found guilty of "clear bias," and the union attorney was found guilty of a "perfunctory" defense at the arbitration hearing.

Only Holodnak's claim to reinstatement was denied by the Judge.

The Judge stated, "Holodnak's physical condition, observed at trial, makes it doubtful that he is physically capable of returning to doing the work he had been doing."

"It's true," Holodnak admitted. "With the artificial hip joints I now have, I wouldn't last on the job very long."

In June of 1972, suffering from a severe case of Ankylosing Spondylitis that rapidly burned out his hip joints, Holodnak had received two pairs of plastic and metal ones at the West Haven Veteran's Hospital.

"I set a precedent there also," Holodnak said. "I was the first one to get two hip joints put in at one time."

Also during the time of his layoff, Holodnak had written a novel called "We Ain't Going Back No More, Nohow."

"I've got a lot of very good responses from people who had read it," Holodnak said. "But unfortunately publishers, not only won't take a chance publishing an unknown, but the damn fools won't even read what one reader called 'a masterpiece in its field.'" After a short pause Holodnak added, "I have no doubt though that this book will some day be published, but it'll take a hell of a lot of persistence. And, believe it or not, I got exactly that, a hell of a lot of persistence."

In the meantime Holodnak is also working on an invention which he and his brother Joe are still perfecting. "I got the idea for it during the period when I was unable to walk," Holodnak said. "Although I no longer need the contraption, it'll help a lot of other people who may need it."

Avco Still Harassing

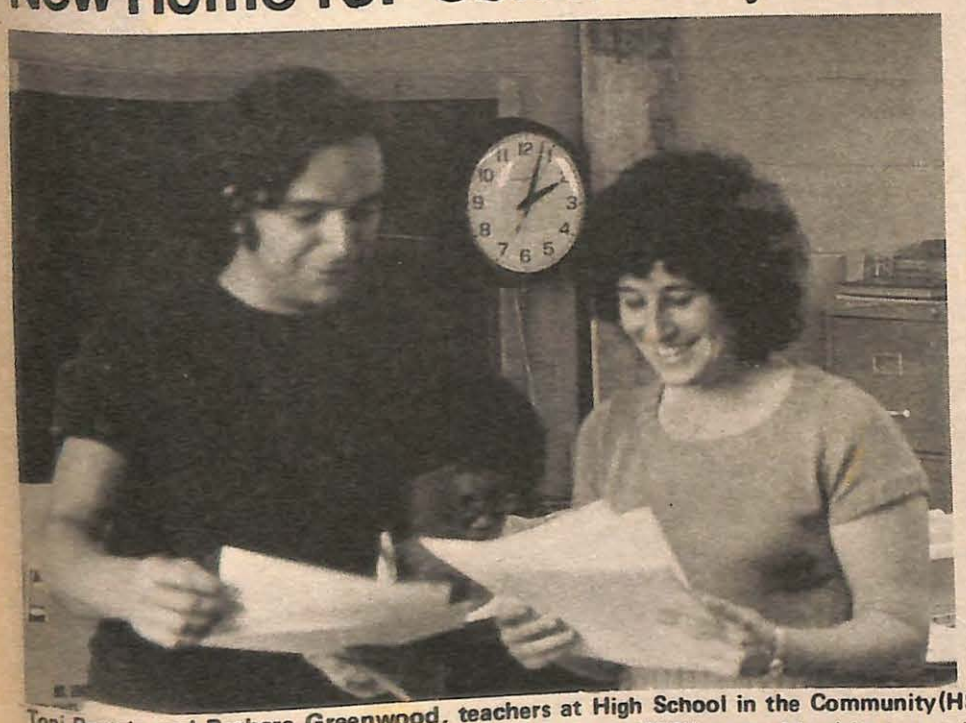
Getting back on the subject of Avco, Holodnak said, "There's one thing I've got to give Avco credit for, they lived up to the label I placed on them when I had called them 'stupid and incompetent.'"

Avco is being sued by at least two more workers. Elsie Wojnarowski, who had 20 years of unblemished service, fired under disgrace because of a paycheck mixup, is suing for reinstatement and all monies lost.

John M. Fernandez, who has more than 20 years service and is still employed at Avco, is suing Avco for one million dollars from an outgrowth of a four-year investigation of race relations at the plant by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

"Things are beginning to look up for all workers," Holodnak said. "Of course, no individual, no matter how lucky he may be, can actually make change that is really meaningful. That requires the efforts of all the people. But, God dammit, it still feels good whenever a David knocks over a Goliath."

New Home for Community H. S.



Fethi Meghelli

Toni Rostain and Barbara Greenwood, teachers at High School in the Community(HSC) have been busy preparing for the first days of school. HSC has combined its two units into one expanded school at the Dixwell Community House at 197 Dixwell Ave.

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Student Gets an Education Working for Union

by Betsy Murray
Modern Times Staff

This past summer I was a Van Heusen boycott representative for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. I will be returning to college this fall to continue my studies in history and economics.

It might sound strange for a college student to be a representative of a labor union, especially for an industry one did not come from, but it isn't all that uncommon. During the 1930's and 1940's it was not unusual for college students to join the trade union movement because they felt it was the most progressive movement in America. This is still the case. The president of my international union along with the presidents of the other large needle trades unions, the Ladies Garment Workers, are both college graduates and lawyers.

My work has involved research, speaking, leafletting, canvassing door to door, and speaking with many Local union presidents, district directors, and rank and filers . I have spent fifty percent of my working hours on the telephone. First, I was doing some advance work on local radio advertising and other forms of media, then I began to pull together the names of the presidents and their locals, with the help of several trade unionists, and with this information I was able to co-ordinate plant gate leafletting to get the word our.

Since July, I have been out every morning at 6 o'clock, and often earlier, at different plants in New Haven and Bridgeport. I also explained the issues at Local and City Labor council meetings to solicit support. I really enjoyed this aspect of my work, especially the questions and discussions that followed my talks.

Work Covers Many Areas

One of the most interesting parts of my work this summer was talking to the union leadershipas they helped passout leaflets to the workers entering the plant . We often talked about the issues that are of great concern such as job safety, runaway shops and imports, and the problems particular to their local and their industry. From them I began to piece together the struggles of the individual industries in America, and the common history that threads through the entite movement.

At the Stamford Labor council meeting, one of my first meetings in June, the recording secretary had by coincidence brought to the meeting a news clipping on child labor in Asian countries. I really appreciated that because it complimented my own presentation that followed on the Van Heusen story.

I had a conversation with the president of the Uniroyal Footwear local in Naugatuck in which we talked about the crisis in the American shoe industry and the company's threats to take all production overseas. Yet, he told me his own membership is buying the foreign made shoes, and they are killing themselves. Many people reading the leaflet wouls look up and say " I don't even buy Van Heusen shirts, I can't afford them." This theme was heard again and again-that availibility of cheaper priced imports poses a perplexing problem particularly for trade unionists acutely aware of the exportation of American jobs.

Found Great Support

I found great support on the Van Heusen campaign and the struggle againist multinational corporations in general. All the trade unionists I came in contact with agreed on the need to prevent the out flow of jobs and to organize the unorganized. The second aspect of the Van Heusen boycott is to organize the American based Van Heusen shirt manufacturing and their retail stores, because this company is the largest shirt maker in the United States that remains unorganized.

I also found the membership of the union to be very receptive to the issue. It was both gratifying and surprising that people would take an interest at 6o'clock in the morning. They in turn were surprised to see me up at that early hour passing out leaflets to them. Many would remark. "You're up early this morning ", and I'd give them a leaflet saying, "So are you."

Job Very Rewarding

I found this job much more rewarding and interesting that I had imagined it would be. Coming from a trade union backround, and learning my labor history from anecdotes I had been hearing since I was a little girl , I thought I already knew a great deal about labor's struggles and how to organize. I soon learned that all these stories could never teach me what I discovered from my own experience. It wasn't until I got out there to pass my own leaflets or to argue the issues, that I began to understand what the labor movenment means.

All the interesting stories I grew up listening to were brought alive this summer because I could compare them to my own experiences. I now have a deeper appreciation of my mother and father's contributions and those of many other trade unionists I met, who shared their histories with me.

Nick Heyer

Rain or shine Betsy Murray is on the job supporting labor struggles. Above she is representing the Clothing Workers in support for the striking CHCP clerical workers.

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Charter Reform: Yes or No

continued from page 1

not required to hold any public hearings.) The Board of Finance is then required to submit the budget to the Board of Aldermen by the third Monday in April as at present. Then the Board of Aldermen will have until the first Monday in June to act on the budget. That's a whole two weeks more than in the current charter. The Board of Aldermen is also given the new power to increase or decrease individual items on the budget as long as it doesn't go over the total amount set by the Board of Finance (by majority vote instead of two-thirds).

This proposal still leaves the unelected Board of Finance with all the taxing and budgeting powers. We are asked to accept one public hearing, two weeks and a few juggling rights as financial reform!

Part 2: WHAT THE VOTER CAN DO?